

Amendments to the Claims

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. through 22. (canceled)
23. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of degrading the image comprises reducing the size of the image.
24. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of degrading the image comprises decreasing resolution of the image.
25. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of determining whether the user is active or inactive further comprises determining whether a certain period of time has elapsed.
26. (previously presented) The method of claim 25, wherein said certain period of time begins when the image was last refreshed.
27. (previously presented) The method of claim 25, wherein said certain period of time begins when the image was last sent to the user's system.
28. (canceled)
29. (canceled)
30. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of determining whether the user is active or inactive further comprises determining whether the user is using the user's system.

31. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of determining whether the user is active or inactive further comprises determining whether a screen saver has been activated on the user's system.
32. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of determining whether the user is active or inactive is performed periodically.
33. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, further comprising:
increasing the quality of the degraded image to produce a less-degraded image upon a determination that the user is active; and
sending said less-degraded image to the user's system.
34. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of refreshing the image is performed more frequently than the step of determining whether to degrade the image.
35. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of determining whether to degrade the image occurs substantially concurrently with a refresh cycle.
36. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the degraded image is sent to the user's system upon refresh.
37. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, further comprising:
receiving a request from the user to increase the quality of the degraded image;
increasing the quality of the degraded image to produce a less-degraded image in response to said request; and
sending said less-degraded image to the user's system.
38. (canceled)

39. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of determining whether to degrade the image further comprises determining whether a certain period of time has elapsed, wherein said certain period of time begins upon a determination that the user is inactive.

40. (previously presented) The method of claim 39, further comprising:
increasing the quality of the degraded image to produce a less-degraded image upon a determination that the user is active; and
sending said less-degraded image to the user's system.

41. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the image is sent to the user's system via a network, wherein the network is the Internet.

42. (canceled)

43. (previously presented) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method comprising:

sending the image to the user's system;

refreshing the image periodically;

determining whether to degrade the image, the step of determining whether to degrade the image comprising determining whether the user is active or inactive, wherein the step of determining whether the user is active or inactive comprises determining whether a window displaying the image is fully visible to the user, wherein the act of determining whether a window displaying the image is fully visible to the user comprises determining whether at least a portion of the image is visually obstructed;

degrading the image to produce a degraded image in response to a determination that said user is inactive; and

sending the degraded image to the user's system.

44. (previously presented) A computer readable medium comprising instructions to perform the method of claim 43.
45. (previously presented) A computer system programmed to perform the method of claim 43.
46. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of determining whether the user is active or inactive further comprises determining whether the user has provided any input into the user's system.
47. (previously presented) The method of claim 43, wherein the image is captured at a first location, wherein the user is located at a second location, wherein the first location is remote from the second location, wherein the user's system is configured to display the image.
48. (currently amended) The method of claim 43, wherein the step of determining whether ~~the image is fully visible to the user~~ at least a portion of the image is visually obscured comprises determining whether a window displaying the image is at least partially visually obstructed by another window.
49. (currently amended) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method comprising:
- receiving the image on the user's system;
 - refreshing the image periodically;
 - determining whether to degrade the image, the step of determining whether to degrade the image comprising determining whether the user is active or inactive, wherein the step of determining whether the user is active or inactive comprises determining whether a window displaying the image is fully visible to the user, wherein the act of determining whether a window displaying the image is fully visible to the user comprises determining whether at least a portion of the image is visually obstructed;

degrading the image to produce a degraded image in response to a determination that said user is inactive; and
receiving the degraded image on the user's system.

50. (new) A method for displaying an image from a camera on a user's system, the method comprising:

receiving the image on the user's system;

refreshing the image periodically;

determining whether to degrade the image, the act of determining whether to degrade the image comprising determining whether the user is active or inactive, wherein the act of determining whether the user is active or inactive comprises determining whether the image is fully visible to the user, wherein the act of determining whether the image is fully visible to the user comprises determining whether at least a portion of the image is visually obstructed;

degrading the image to produce a degraded image in response to a determination that said user is inactive; and

receiving the degraded image on the user's system.